

VZCZCXRO0477
OO RUEHROV
DE RUEHKH #0307 0591522
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 281522Z FEB 07
FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6296
INFO RUCNFUR/DARFUR COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
RUEHTRO/AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI IMMEDIATE 0080
RHMFISS/CJTF HOA IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L KHARTOUM 000307

SIPDIS

NOFORN
SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR AF A/S FRAZER, AF S/E NATSIOS, AF/SPG
NSC FOR PITTMAN AND SHORTLEY
ADDIS ABABA ALSO FOR USAU

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/27/2017
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [KPKO](#) [AU](#) [UN](#) [SU](#) [ER](#) [CD](#) [LY](#) [EUN](#)
SUBJECT: DARFUR: ERITREAN MEDDLING, TENSIONS BETWEEN
CHAD/SUDAN

REF: KHARTOUM 00287

Classified By: CDA Cameron Hume, Reason: Sections 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) At the February 27 meeting of the Darfur Partners Group, two European political officers who had attended the recent summit in Tripoli said that Eritrea had pressed the Darfur Peace Agreement (DPA) non-signatory leaders to join a political process outside the joint UN and African Union (AU) effort endorsed by the USG and the international community. The non-signatory leaders had told Eritrean officials that they would not participate in any negotiations until the conference of commanders in North Darfur resulted in a more unified rebel movement. According to Norwegian Poloff Asmund Skeie (please protect), Sudanese officials did not meet with any non-signatory leaders at the summit.

Pressure from Asmara

¶2. (C) Addressing the UN and AU representatives, the Partners recommended that the new Joint Mediation Support Team (JMST) work to channel Eritrean action into a more constructive and internationally-recognized process. The Director of Political Affairs at the UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) said that UN Envoy Jan Eliasson had been scheduled to visit Asmara this week but had fallen ill. The AU official claimed that the Tripoli summit had not focused on the non-signatory political process but was an attempt to defuse tensions between Chad and Sudan. The UK Deputy Chief of Mission noted that this was also the Sudanese government's public position. (Comment: Norway's good bilateral relationship with Eritrea would make it a natural interlocutor in support of the UN/AU team. The leadership of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), which has long-standing ties with Asmara, might also be helpful given their renewed interest in advancing the peace process for Darfur. End comment.)

Chad/Sudan Tensions

¶3. (C) AU representatives warned of the explosive situation between Chad and Sudan. They said that the Sudanese government had reinforced Chadian rebels led by Mahamat Nouri while the Chadian government had contributed to a dramatic increase in the strength of the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) in recent weeks. The AU estimated the JEM's current capacity at between 2,000 and 3,000 fighters--up from 400 troops--and said that the movement's goals had "narrowed" to

a defense of President Deby's regime. The AU further claimed to have "credible information" that Chadian rebels based in Sudan had clashed with JEM forces in the last week.

14. (C) "You could say that the Government of Sudan has successfully moved its war with Chad out of Sudan," said the UK Defense Attache. He explained that there had been no major fighting between Sudanese government forces and Darfur rebels since early January. He characterized the security situation in Darfur as an "ambient level" of violence, saying "we've had a very, very quiet Darfur for the last two months." This dramatic decrease in violence between the Government and the rebels, however, was accompanied by an increase in inter-tribal fighting, which had caused mounting pressure on humanitarian operations.

Inter-Rebel Clashes

15. (C) In a pull-aside with Poloff after the meeting, EU Poloff Umberto Tavalato (please protect) said that Sudan Federal Democratic Alliance (SFDA) leader Sharif Harir was acting under the complete control of Eritrea, which was encouraging him and others to reject a political process involving the AU. He also said that a fire-fight had ensued between Harir's forces and fighters aligned with former G-19 commander Adam Bakhit in the days leading up to the Tripoli Summit. (Note: Contacts in Khartoum have reported similar accounts of clashes between Harir and Bakhit's forces. End note.)

16. (U) Tripoli minimize considered.
HUME